

## **Jane Austen's Global Influence**

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### **Summary**

Jane Austen (1775-1817) is a writer with a global reputation. She is one of a very few writers to enjoy both a wide popular readership and critical acclaim, and one of even fewer writers of her period whose name has instant recognition. Her literary reputation rests on six novels – *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1816), *Northanger Abbey* (1818) and *Persuasion* (1818) – a handful of unfinished works, and three manuscript notebooks of juvenilia, but this small oeuvre has been translated into almost every known language, adapted for film and television across the world, and has spawned an enormous number of sequels, prequels, spin-offs, remediations and other fan-fictions in both print and digital media. Critics have, for more than two centuries, attempted both to describe the technical brilliance of Austen's work, and to account for her surprising popularity with very diverse audiences. Her works describe the daily realities of life in Georgian and Regency England, but clearly still speak to modern, world-wide audiences. She is known simultaneously as a romance writer *par excellence*, and as a deeply ironic and sceptical social commentator. Her style is characterised by economy, brevity and wit, and through a series of technical innovations in the craft of writing, Austen transformed the genre of the novel, and thus its status from the nineteenth century onwards. Her international success, however, can be attributed only partly to the brilliance of her literary output, and must, in part, be ascribed to the work of successive film adaptations of her novels, in particular the 1940 and 1995 versions of *Pride and Prejudice*, starring respectively Greer Garson and Laurence Olivier, and Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth. Across the world, many people now know Austen's works primarily through the medium of film adaptations of her novels, and biopics that fictionalise her life. 'Jane Austen' has become a lucrative brand, existing almost irrespective of the original works.

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There are very few writers of whom this can be said with truth, but Jane Austen is truly a global phenomenon (William Shakespeare is perhaps the only other with a similar cultural status). Her image is instantly recognisable, from Basingstoke to Beijing, Texas to Tehran. Her face adorns the British ten pound note. Her aphorisms decorate tea towels, mugs, notebooks, jewellery, cushions and bric-a-brac of all kinds across the globe. At last count, there were seventy-six regional chapters of the Jane Austen Society of North America, and ten of the Jane Austen Society (UK). Jane Austen societies and/or fan clubs also exist in Pakistan, Australia, Iran, India, Spain, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Norway, Japan, and Argentina (among others). Austen's novels have been translated into almost every known language, and film and television adaptations of all the complete works now exist. In addition, there have been two successful biopics, *Becoming Jane* (2007) and *Miss Austen Regrets* (2008), and a number of loose adaptations of her work, which set it in different times and places (these include the Tamil-language adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility*, *Kandukondain Kandukondain* (2000), the Bollywood version of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Bride and Prejudice* (2004), *Clueless* (1995), which adapts Austen's *Emma* and sets it in 1990s Los Angeles and the Latino remediation of *Sense and Sensibility*, also set in Los Angeles, *From Prada to Nada* (2011)).<sup>1</sup>

In many ways, though, these works are just the tip of a much larger iceberg. Austen has become a source for dramatizations (both amateur and professional), musicals, film adaptations, modernisations, biopics, documentaries, rewritings, sequels and prequels, fanfictions and festivals. The internet has enabled all kinds of creative responses to Austen's works, including blogs, vlogs such as *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* (2012), video games, mash-ups and online fan-fiction of all kinds. Austenian fandom is, in fact, big business, and, as Kylie Mirmohamadi puts it, “‘Everybody’s Jane’ has arrived on the screens that increasingly furnish our daily lives. In word and image Jane Austen inhabits the glass worlds of the television screen, computer, laptop, tablet and smart phone”.<sup>2</sup> Austenian fandom has itself become a subject of both serious study and popular culture. Academic studies of the topic have multiplied in the past twenty years, while novels, films and TV series that document the world of the fan (*The Jane Austen Book Club*; *Jane Austen Ruined my Life*, *Austenland*, *Lost in Austen*) have proven to be very popular.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Austen’s global reputation has attracted the attention of scholars, with studies now in existence that discuss the French, Swiss, Dutch, German, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Slovenian, Croatian, Serbian, Romanian, Polish, Russian, American, Canadian, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Korean, Turkish, Brazilian, African, West Indian, Japanese, and Australasian contexts.<sup>4</sup>

This world-wide celebrity is all the more astonishing given the smallness of the *oeuvre* on which Austen’s reputation rests (six novels, plus some juvenilia and unfinished works) and the modesty of her success in her own time. Indeed, Cassandra Austen, her sister and closest confidante, was astonished to find that her sister’s novels survived so long into the nineteenth century: ‘Is it not remarkable that those Books have risen so much in celebrity after so many years? I think it may be proof that they possess intrinsic merit’, she wrote to their niece Anna Lefroy in 1844.<sup>5</sup> What Cassandra would think of her sister’s twenty-first-century status is almost unimaginable, although, as Devoney Looser points out in *The Making of Jane Austen* (2017), Austen has had a place in popular culture for a very long time, and ‘her reputation has shifted with the times and with the needs and desires of her multiple audiences’.<sup>6</sup> Successive readerships have adapted her for their own purposes and with their own agendas. Suffragettes, for example, claimed Austen in the service of women’s right to vote, while conservative politicians also quoted her for the opposite political purposes. Different readers simultaneously see in her novels traditionalism and radicalism, conformity and subversiveness, homogeneity and alterity, romance and cynicism. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that a world of increasing globalisation has produced, or ‘made’, to use Looser’s term, a global Jane Austen. The question, then, is, how did this come about in practice?

## Historical Contexts

Jane Austen was born in 1775, the year the American colonies began their fight for independence, and she died in 1817, two years after the Battle of Waterloo brought the Napoleonic Wars in Europe to a decisive end. She herself lived most of her life in the peace and tranquillity of rural Hampshire, as the daughter of a country clergyman, but two of her brothers were sailors, fighting in the British Navy, and her cousin’s husband was guillotined during the French Revolution. Yet, as Tony Tanner ironically points out, when discussing *Pride and Prejudice*, ‘during a decade in which Napoleon was effectively engaging, if not transforming, Europe, Jane Austen composed a novel in which the most important events are that a man changes his manners and a young lady changes her mind’.<sup>7</sup> And Austen herself stressed the fact that she did not write about historical or political events, telling the Prince Regent’s librarian, who had urged her to write a history of the German ducal House of Saxe-

Coburg, that she preferred her own ‘pictures of domestic Life in Country Villages’, and claiming (humorously) to be ‘the most unlearned and uninformed Female who ever dared to be an Authoress’.<sup>8</sup>

It is true that the central dramas of Austen’s novels are personal, rather than political, and many literary critics have attributed the novels’ continued success to the ‘timeless’ or ‘universal’ quality of her characters and plots. Austen’s detractors, however, tend to suggest that the novels are too limited in their scope, ignoring world events in favour of a claustrophobic focus on relationships and family dynamics. While Austen herself did tell her niece that ‘3 or 4 Families in a Country Village is the very thing to work on’<sup>9</sup>, and she tended to follow her own advice, the three or four families on whom Austen’s novels focus are nonetheless embedded in the wider cultural, social and political events of Austen’s times. The novels refer to such events, even while they do not comment explicitly on them. Jane Austen wrote about what she knew, which was gentry-class society in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and her novels reflect the preoccupations of that society. Austen frequently alludes casually to books, people, places and historical events, making the assumption that her readers will know what she means without having it spelled out to them. In *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, soldiers of the militia are quartered at Meryton, the town closest to the heroine’s home. Why else would they be there, if Britain were not at war? In *Persuasion*, the Naval hero makes his fortune because of the opportunities for financial reward offered by the war at sea, and Austen dates *Persuasion* with absolute precision (the novel begins in the summer of 1814; Anne Elliot and Frederick Wentworth first meet in 1806, after which Wentworth goes to sea) so that the readers of her own time would have been able to reconstruct the real battles in which he fought. In *Mansfield Park*, Sir Thomas Bertram leaves his home to settle some difficulties on his estates in Antigua, a reference to the declining profitability of the sugar trade during the wars with France and America. As scholarship by Janine Barchas and Jocelyn Harris conclusively demonstrates, contemporary references to cultural, political and historical events and people in fact abound in the novels, but they are treated with a lightness of touch that sometimes renders them invisible.<sup>10</sup>

This is largely because such details tend to work seamlessly in the service of either plot or character development in Austen’s novels. It is, for example, Sir Thomas’s absence from home in *Mansfield Park* that allows his sons and daughters the freedom to pursue their romantic entanglements without parental supervision. And in *Pride and Prejudice*, the presence of the militia in Meryton is the catalyst for Elizabeth Bennet’s misconceptions about Mr Darcy, which in turn drive the romantic plot. It is, in fact, a characteristic of Austen’s writing that there are no extraneous details irrelevant to either plot or characterisation. Her works are often considered to be the most perfectly constructed novels in the English language for this very reason, as well as because of the elegance of her prose style.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, the extent to which Austen’s prose style had been altered by printers and editors came under scrutiny, notably by Kathryn Sutherland, in her *Jane Austen’s Textual Lives: from Aeschylus to Bollywood* (2005). Austen’s manuscripts were largely un-paragraphed, and punctuated according to Austen’s own private system, and Sutherland argues that significant changes to the punctuation, spelling, paragraphing and speech indentations took place in the production process, and were not necessarily sanctioned by the author. The work of successive editors, Sutherland suggests, codified these emendations, and hence had a twofold result. While they helped to establish Austen’s reputation as a perfect stylist, and hence as an author who was more amenable to so-called correct and masculine tastes, they also concealed some of the more radically experimental

and exciting of Austen's experiments with the novel form.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, whether despite or because of the work of her early editors, such as William Gifford, her works as they appeared after their published first editions, are famed for their linguistic precision and grace.

### Austen's Early Readers

It took some time, however, before Jane Austen was recognised as a great writer. In the early and middle nineteenth century, readers and critics tended to admire Austen for her 'pure morality', her skill in characterisation, the 'elegance' of her writing and the 'natural' or realistic quality of her works, but they tended not to think of her as a truly great writer, and they largely did not recognise the profundity of her satirical vision.<sup>12</sup> Both Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Alfred, Lord Tennyson, for example, thought her works perfect in their own sphere, but limited in their ambition and scope.<sup>13</sup>

The most important literary successes of Austen's time were the Waverley novels, published anonymously from 1814 onwards by Sir Walter Scott. Before the Waverley novels burst upon the scene, and as the young Jane Austen was growing up and beginning to write, the best-known novelists of the 1790s and 1800s were Ann Radcliffe, whose Gothic stories Austen parodied in *Northanger Abbey*, and Frances Burney, whose *Cecilia* may have provided the title for Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The last pages of *Cecilia* repeat the phrase three times: 'The whole of this unfortunate business has been the result of PRIDE AND PREJUDICE [...] Yet this, however, remember: if to PRIDE AND PREJUDICE you owe your miseries, so wonderfully is good and evil balanced, that to PRIDE AND PREJUDICE you will also owe their termination'.<sup>14</sup> Austen also lived in a great age for poetry. The poetic movement that has now come to be known as Romanticism was born in the 1780s and flourished until beyond Austen's death in 1817. The most popular poets of the era were Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott (discussed by Captain Benwick and Anne Elliot in *Persuasion*), but the works of William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats were all known to Jane Austen.

In comparison to such best-sellers as Byron, Scott and Radcliffe, Austen's works enjoyed only modest success and reputation in her own time. Where, for example, Frances Burney made £2000 on her novel *Camilla, Mansfield Park*, the most popular of Austen's novels in her lifetime, made her a profit of just over £310. Nonetheless, she did have a small but dedicated following from the very beginning, particularly among aristocratic and gentry-class coteries, and her literary contemporaries. Although her works were not widely reviewed, such reviews that did exist were very positive, recognising immediately the merit of each individual work. Her novels initially gained popularity largely through word of mouth among the closely connected and clannish aristocratic circles. In November 1811, just after the publication of *Sense and Sensibility*, the notorious but well-connected Lady Bessborough recommended the novel to a friend: 'It is a clever novel. They were full of it at Althrop, and tho' it ends stupidly, I was much amus'd by it'.<sup>15</sup> Lady Bessborough was the sister of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, at whose home, Althrop, she had clearly been discussing the novel, and the mother of Lady Caroline Lamb, best-known for her scandalous affair with Lord Byron, which she later published in fictionalised form as the novel *Glenarvon* (1816). History does not relate whether Caroline Lamb read Austen's novels (though it seems probable), but both Augusta Leigh, Byron's half-sister, and Annabella Milbanke, Byron's future wife, certainly did. Annabella reported that *Pride and Prejudice* was 'the fashionable novel' of 1813 among her own circles, and told her mother she thought it to be a 'very superior work', and 'the most probable' novel she had ever read.<sup>16</sup> Byron himself did not

comment on Austen's novels, but a number of other Romantic poets clearly read and enjoyed them.

Both Coleridge and Robert Southey, for example, admired Austen highly. Sara Coleridge, the poet's daughter, thought Jane Austen to be 'the most faultless of female novelists', and reported that both her father and her uncle, Robert Southey, 'had an equally high opinion of her merits'. William Wordsworth, by contrast, 'used to say that though he admitted that her novels were an admirable copy of life, he could not be interested in productions of that kind; unless the truth of nature were presented to him clarified, as it were, by the pervading light of imagination, it had scarce any attractions in his eyes'.<sup>17</sup> Obviously, discussions of Austen's novels were not unusual among the Lake Poets, and her works seem to have contributed to important debates about the relationships between reality and the imagination, key concepts in Romantic poetry.

Austen herself collected together the opinions of *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* of friends, family members and a wider circle of acquaintance. From this collection, readers can gather much information about the expectations of her contemporary audience, and the extent to which Jane Austen's novels met and overturned those expectations. In the early nineteenth century (Austen's novels were published between 1811 and 1818), the novel was not generally considered to be a form of high culture. Poetry, history and biography were the most reputable genres in which to write and novels occupied a status and position below these, with many cultural commentators believing that fiction was actually dangerous for its readers. Although the novel as a form had its defenders, when Austen began to write novels, she was fighting against a tide of opinion that saw her chosen art form as, at best, frivolous, and at worst, morally pernicious. Such opinions were not entirely unjustified, since at the time Austen entered the literary marketplace, the prevailing mode of writing was sensationalist gothic horror. Readers were more used to encountering far-fetched tales of kidnap, rape, murder and ghostly visitations than novels which depicted life as they actually knew it. In the 1810s, Austen and Walter Scott created a taste for an entirely different mode of writing – one which would later come to be known as realism – and began the transformation of the novel into a serious literary form. In *Northanger Abbey*, Austen mounted a spirited defence of the novel, in which she claimed that novels had 'afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure' than any other genre of literature, and that they were the works which displayed 'the greatest powers of the mind', and evidenced 'the most thorough knowledge of human nature' of any writing. She also suggested that novels included 'the liveliest effusions of wit and humour' and were written in 'the best chosen language'.<sup>18</sup> But in 1814 and 1816, as Austen's early readers encountered *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* for the first time, such changes in perception were yet to come. Austen's early readers approached her novels with the expectation that they would simply be entertained, and that if they happened to receive any moral enlightenment from fiction, it would come from the example of fictional characters who were morally or spiritually better than those in real life.

Readers were therefore surprised to find in Austen's novels characters who were recognisably *like them*. As Lady Gordon put it, 'In most novels you are amused for the time with a set of Ideal People whom you never think of afterwards or whom you the least expect to meet in common life, whereas in Miss A---'s works, & especially in *M.P.* you actually *live* with them, you fancy yourself one of the family; & the scenes are so exactly descriptive, so perfectly natural, that there is scarcely an Incident, or conversation, or a person, that you are not inclined to imagine you have at one time or other in your Life been a witness to, borne a part in, & been acquainted with.'<sup>19</sup> And readers were surprised to find themselves caught up in the

action without any of the excitement generated by melodrama. The novelist Susan Ferrier, for example, wrote to her friend Miss Clavering of *Emma*: ‘I have been reading *Emma*, which is excellent; there is no story whatsoever, and the heroine is no better than other people, but the characters are all so true to life, and the style so piquant, that it does not require the adventitious aids of mystery and adventure’.<sup>20</sup> Jane Austen’s most surprising achievement, in the eyes of her own contemporaries, was her ability to make the fictional seem ‘natural’ or ‘real’.

Austen’s reception outside Britain was, however, complicated by a number of factors.<sup>21</sup> As Valérie Cossy and Diego Saglia argue, ‘the early to mid nineteenth-century panorama of Austen’s reception and translation in Europe is generally characterised by gaps and absences’.<sup>22</sup> Cossy and Saglia suggest that Austen was largely underestimated across continental Europe because ‘[c]ontinental translators had to make [the novels] relevant to local traditions of novel writing and readers’ habits. Most often this involved accommodating a local variety of sentimentalism and suppressing Austen’s humour.’ (170). Reading Austen in translation very often involved reading texts that had been stripped of much of their wit, irony and experimentalism, as well as the more controversial or subversive gender politics. So although Austen was translated into French, German, Swedish and Danish in the nineteenth century, as Cossy and Saglia point out, what readers of those translations encountered ‘was, and was *not*, Jane Austen’ (179). The result is that, even today, as Massimiliano Morini discusses, in parts of continental Europe, Austen’s reputation is not that of an ironist, but as a writer of ‘fascinating, highly polished, formally perfect representations of a fascinating, highly polished formally perfect world.’ Readers go to them, Morini suggests, ‘in order to immerse oneself in the manners of a faraway age and place’.<sup>23</sup> In America, on the other hand, Austen’s works, as Juliette Wells shows in *Reading Austen in America* (2017), Austen’s early reception history more closely parallels Britain.

### Becoming a Global Phenomenon

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the reputation of Austen’s novels gradually grew, helped by a number of positive retrospective reviews, and the enthusiasm of such public figures as Lord Macaulay and G.H. Lewes in the mid-century. Lewes made the claim that Austen was without a superior in the depiction of character, and in the truth of her representations, while Macaulay suggested that she was second only to Shakespeare in the ranks of England’s writers.<sup>24</sup> While such endorsements helped to create Austen’s reputation as a writer for the literary elite, Devoney Looser also draws critics’ attention to the importance of the illustrators and publishers who created editions of Austen’s work that helped to popularise her with women and members of the middle and labouring classes.<sup>25</sup>

By the time James Edward Austen-Leigh, Jane Austen’s nephew, decided to publish a biography of his aunt in 1870, it was clear to him that there was public demand for more information about her, and he presented his *Memoir of Jane Austen* to the public on that basis. From the 1870s onwards, Austen’s works began to receive both serious critical attention, and popular acclaim, across the Anglophone world. Her work was admired by a number of influential literary men, such as A.C Bradley, E.M. Forster and Rudyard Kipling, who all spread their view of Austen’s excellence to the reading public at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1911, A.C. Bradley made the claim for Austen as both a serious moralist, and an incomparable humourist, and in 1917, Reginald Farrer wrote an influential essay in the *Times Literary Supplement*, in which he established Austen’s technical mastery. Not everyone agreed, of course – the American novelist Mark Twain, in contrast, responded

with a performative visceral dislike to Austen's novels, wishing, on reading *Pride and Prejudice*, that he could 'dig her up and beat her over the skull with her own shin-bone'.<sup>26</sup> But by 1948, F.R. Leavis could confidently assert that Jane Austen was one of the four great English novelists of his putative Great Tradition (the others, in his opinion, were George Eliot, Joseph Conrad and Henry James. Interestingly, Charles Dickens does not feature in this initial list). Since then, Austen's novels have been firmly entrenched in the curricula of schools and universities (although Looser points out that Austen had been used as a schoolroom text, in the form of abridgements, since the 1870s. She also played an important part in the teaching of elocution and amateur dramatics well before the turn of the twentieth century<sup>27</sup>). Her place in the literary canon has been shored up by successive schools of literary criticism. While other authors go in and out of fashion, as critical tastes change, Austen remains consistently popular with both students and teachers. And Austen is, in fact, the only one of the writers in Leavis' Great Tradition to have a significant popular readership as well as an academic one.

Throughout the twentieth century, Austen remained steadily popular. Her works were translated into Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Korean, Marathi, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian and Croatian, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, and Turkish.<sup>28</sup> As the list demonstrates, she became increasingly popular on the Indian sub-continent. She occasioned a number of important critical debates during this time – but it was not until the 1990s that the phenomenon dubbed Austen-mania really emerged (although it had some significant precursors).<sup>29</sup> Austen had always had a number of die-hard admirers – as early as 1927, Arnold Bennett commented that 'the reputation of Jane Austen is surrounded by cohorts of defenders who are ready to do murder for their sacred cause. They are nearly all fanatics'.<sup>30</sup> The 1940 *Pride and Prejudice* film starring Laurence Olivier as Mr Darcy and Greer Garson as Elizabeth had a significant impact in bringing Austen to the notice of the film-going public, but it was Colin Firth's performance as Mr Darcy in the BBC television series of 1995 that brought legions of new fans to her books. The 1990s saw a number of screen adaptations of the novels, including the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* (1995) and *Persuasion* (1995), Ang Lee's *Sense and Sensibility* (1995), Patricia Rozema's *Mansfield Park* (1999), and two separate adaptations of *Emma* in 1996. The 2000 and 2010s spawned yet more – including another adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, directed by Joe Davis (2005), another *Mansfield Park*, directed by Iain B. Macdonald (2007), another *Persuasion* (2007), and Jon Jones' *Northanger Abbey* (2007).

In addition to 'straight' adaptations of the novels, Amy Heckerling's *Clueless* (1995) translated the plot of *Emma* into a 1990s Californian high school, while the 2004 Bollywood *Bride and Prejudice* (directed by Gurinder Chadha) relocated *Pride and Prejudice* to modern-day India, following in the footsteps of the less well-known *Kandukondain Kandukondain* (2000), a Tamil-language version of *Sense and Sensibility*, while the film versions of Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (2001; novel first published 1996) and *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (2004; novel first published 1996) loosely adopted the plots of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion* and set them in modern-day London. The Mormon *Pride and Prejudice: A Latter- Day Comedy* set the film in Provo, Utah. Marvel Comics produced multi-instalment graphic novel adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* (2009), *Sense and Sensibility* (2010), *Northanger Abbey* (2011), and *Emma* (2011). In 2007, Anne Hathaway starred as Jane Austen in the heavily fictionalised biopic, *Becoming Jane* (directed by Julian Jarrold), and a year later, Olivia Williams portrayed a very different Jane Austen in *Miss*

*Austen Regrets* (2008). Reflecting the mood of the times, at the same time, three works that dealt directly with Austenian fandom appeared, the time-travel television series *Lost in Austen* (2008), in which the protagonist changes places with Elizabeth Bennet and lives out her fantasy of being a character in *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Jane Austen Book Club* (2007), a film based on Karen Joy Fowler's 2004 novel of that name, which takes as its premise the idea that a book club might discuss only Austen's works, and the results of so doing, and *Austenland* (2013, based on Shannon Hale's book of 2007), in which a woman obsessed with the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* travels to an Austen-themed resort in Britain, hoping to meet a real-life Mr Darcy. Most recently, Whit Stillman's 2016 film *Love and Friendship* adapted Austen's *Lady Susan* to both popular and critical acclaim.

The bicentenary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice* in 2013 was marked, not only by traditional academic events, such as conferences, and the usual publishers' reissues of the novel, but also by radio programs, Regency balls, and television programs, including the BBC's re-creation of the Netherfield Ball at Chawton House Library, the former home of Jane Austen's brother, Edward Knight, complete with historically accurate food, make-up, clothing and candles. The Austen Project (brainchild of publishing giant HarperCollins) controversially commissioned successful contemporary writers to rewrite all of Austen's completed novels (Joanna Trollope wrote a version of *Sense and Sensibility*, Val McDermid took on *Northanger Abbey*, Alexander McCall Smith tried his hand at *Emma*, and Curtis Sittenfeld updated *Pride and Prejudice*). But by 2018, neither *Persuasion* nor *Northanger Abbey* appeared, though a bizarre time-travel novel entitled *The Jane Austen Project* by Kathleen A. Flynn (also published by HarperCollins), was issued in February 2017. Websites dedicated entirely to Jane Austen abound, and a large number of completions, sequels, prequels and spin-off novels continue to be written and published, either in conventional print formats or self-published on web platforms such as Wattpad. Maria Bajoli suggests that published works of this nature alone numbered some 564 in March of 2016, while counting the myriad manifestations of Austeniana on the internet is simply impossible.<sup>31</sup> Austen features as a detective, in Stephanie Barron's successful series of murder mysteries, and P.D. James's sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*, *Death Comes to Pemberley* (2011; serialized for television 2013) also belongs to the detective story genre. Indeed, it is now hard to imagine an Austen mash-up genre that does not yet exist. Her novels have been rewritten and repurposed to include pop-stars, pornography, zombies, werewolves, sea-monsters, aliens, murderers and time travel, to name only a few. Regardless of the literary merit of such works, it cannot be denied that they demonstrate the intense and continuing devotion that readers across the globe feel towards Austen's novels, and for the author herself. The runaway success of *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* (2012-3), a modern-day retelling of *Pride and Prejudice* in vlog style, bears tribute to the fact that Austen still speaks to a modern, born-digital readership.

## **The Secret of her Success**

What is the secret of her enduring success? Virginia Woolf thought that 'of all great writers, she is the most difficult to catch in the act of greatness'.<sup>32</sup> Critics have argued for more than two centuries now about what makes Jane Austen a great novelist, and consensus remains elusive, though there is some common ground on which all agree. First and foremost, of course, Austen is a great comic writer, with a brilliant ear for dialogue, and a talent for creating familiar and life-like characters. Her fools, in particular, are recognisable across time and cultures. Who does not know someone who is, like *Northanger Abbey*'s Mrs Allen, obsessed with fashion and clothes? Who has not met somebody whose opinion of their own

worth is higher than it should be, like *Pride and Prejudice*'s Mr Collins, or *Persuasion*'s Sir Walter Elliot? Don't we all know a scheming Lady Susan, who is only out for her own good? Secondly, Jane Austen's plotting is tight, smart and economical – as G.H. Lewes put it as early as 1859, 'no novelist has approached her in what we may style "the economy of art", by which is meant the easy adaptation of means to ends, with no aid from extraneous or superfluous elements'.<sup>33</sup> She is an astonishingly innovative writer, daring to redefine the form in which she worked. And her writing style is unusually elegant. But the same could be said of many writers who share her indubitable technical expertise, but do not have Austen's fame or durability. What sets Jane Austen apart?

Austen herself wrote, in a letter to her sister Cassandra, 'I do not write for such dull Elves / As have not a great deal of Ingenuity themselves'.<sup>34</sup> Another way of putting this would be to say that Austen's primary mode of writing is ironic, and irony depends for its comic effects on the gap between what is said and what is meant. Her novels therefore depend on her readers' willingness to engage actively with the writing, and to fill in what is *not* said for themselves. Readers can share a joke with the author against the foolish, mercenary or downright unpleasant characters in the novels, and thus learn self-knowledge alongside Austen's heroines. In so doing, readers feel pleasantly aligned on the side of narrative authority against folly and vice. It is this quality in the writing that makes readers feel, as Katherine Mansfield wrote, that 'every true admirer of the novels cherishes the happy thought that he alone – reading between the lines – has become the secret friend of their author'.<sup>35</sup> And it is Austen's sparseness and economy that also allows successive generations to project onto Austen's works their own preoccupations, to re-interpret Jane Austen for themselves, and to find in her writing relevance to their own lives. However, Austen's style also plays games with the reader, and the ludic quality of her writing has kept readers both entertained and instructed for more than two centuries.<sup>36</sup>

It is also indisputably the case that many readers find Jane Austen's novels to be both comforting and often inspiring. Readers in search of romance will find it in Austen's books, where the good characters get married and have their happy endings. But they will also find a robust scepticism about human nature, and a realistic acceptance of people as they are. W.H. Auden perceptively noted that Austen's novels ruthlessly exposed 'the economic basis of society';<sup>37</sup> at the same time, she is never cynical about the possibility of love, or its place in human happiness. It is also true that Austen's minor female characters such as Miss Bates, Mrs Smith or Isabella Thorpe remind us of the bleakness of a woman's lot in Georgian England, even as Austen's heroines triumphantly transcend their potential fates.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps Jane Austen's greatest achievement may be that she makes her readers believe in the possibility of romance, even as she ironizes it.

In postmodernity, readers may find consolation in entering a fictional world that appears to be more stable, where moral values seem to be more certain, where community is valued above individualism, and the good get their due rewards. In 1957, C.S. Lewis related the sense of certainty engendered by Austen's novels to her word choices: 'the great abstract nouns of the classical English moralists are unblushingly and uncompromisingly used; *good sense, courage, contentment, fortitude*, "some duty neglected, some failing indulged", *impropriety, indelicacy, generous candour, blamable distrust, just humiliation, vanity, folly, ignorance, reason*. These are the concepts by which Jane Austen grasps the world. [...] All is hard, clear, definable; by some modern standards, even naively so'.<sup>39</sup> Although it is, of course, an illusion, Austen's fictional world may thus seem more solid than our own real one, with all of its shifting uncertainties. It is no coincidence that Austen's novels enjoy a

resurgence of popularity at moments of particular cultural crisis, such as during both World Wars and the so-called War on Terror of the 2000s. Conversely, there are those readers and critics who rejoice in precisely the opposite aspect of Austen's work, enjoying her quietly subversive, even rebellious wit, and the destabilizing brilliance of her sceptical vision.<sup>40</sup>

Austen's published works reveal two distinct stages in her artistic development, while her juvenilia shows us the artist in training, as Olivia Murphy and others have persuasively argued.<sup>41</sup> *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Northanger Abbey* were all first written in the 1790s, and substantially revised over the following ten to fifteen years before publication in 1811, 1813 and 1818, respectively. *Lady Susan*'s composition date is less certain, but the most authoritative criticism suggests that it was either written around the same time as the ur-text of *Sense and Sensibility*, 'Elinor and Marianne' (1794-5), or around 1805. These four works are by a young, and precociously brilliant writer. *Mansfield Park*, *Emma* and *Persuasion* are the novels of Austen's mature years, written between 1813 and 1817, and published in 1814, 1816 and 1818. These are her most technically accomplished novels, bearing the hallmarks of a professional writer, who had learned and honed her literary techniques through exposure to the literary marketplace. All seven bear out Austen's defence of the novel in *Northanger Abbey*. For the past two hundred years, they have proven that novels can use the best chosen language and provide unparalleled insight into human nature. In so doing, they have afforded extensive and unaffected pleasure to their readers across the Anglophone world, and, in translation, far beyond that. No doubt they will do so for two hundred more.

## Discussion of the Literature

The MLA International Bibliography returns 4,946 results for works on Jane Austen. This discussion of the critical literature is thus necessarily selective, and to some extent partial.<sup>42</sup>

### *Biographies*

Little evidence or information about Austen's life beyond the bare facts remains, but this has not prevented the existence of a large number of biographies, some scholarly, some speculative. All later biographies depend, to a greater or lesser extent, on two biographies by members of Jane Austen's family. The first is the brief 'Biographical Notice of the Author' by her brother, Henry Austen, which was appended to the first edition of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* in 1818. This was revised and expanded in 1832 and published as 'Memoir of Miss Austen' in the Richard Bentley edition of the novels in 1833. The second is the 1870 *Memoir of Jane Austen*, by her nephew, James-Edward Austen-Leigh, which went into a revised and enlarged second edition in 1871. Further family reminiscences were gathered together by two of her great-nephews, Richard Arthur Austen-Leigh and William Austen-Leigh, in 1913, and this material is now most accessible in Deirdre Le Faye's *Jane Austen: A Family Record* (2004), which remains the most comprehensive factual biography of the novelist based on family records. Kathryn Sutherland's edition of J.E. Austen-Leigh's *Memoir of Jane Austen* also includes a number of other family recollections, and, as she demonstrates, the family biographers carefully shaped the image of Jane Austen encountered by the public, insisting on her conventionally 'feminine' traits—modesty, domesticity, and kindness—and presenting her as an amateur who wrote for 'fun', rather than profit, and as a somewhat unworldly woman, 'dear Aunt Jane'.<sup>43</sup> Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century biography and criticism – including Leslie Stephen's original *Dictionary of National Biography* article of 1885 – reiterated the image of Austen presented in the family

biographies, but the revision of the ‘dear Aunt Jane’ image has formed the basis of much work in Austen studies since the reappearance of a subversive Austen in the 1940s, and this is particularly evident in a number of biographies of Austen that appeared in the 1980s and 1990s. John Halperin’s *The Life of Jane Austen* (1984), Park Honan’s *Jane Austen: Her Life* (1987), Jan Fergus’s *Jane Austen: A Literary Life* (1991), and David Nokes’s *Jane Austen: A Life* (1997), all attempted to redress the balance of the family biographies by focusing on alternative aspects of Austen’s personality, such as her bawdy humour, involvement in contemporary politics, cutting wit, and serious literary professionalism. Nokes, for example, presented Austen as ‘rebellious, satirical and wild’.<sup>44</sup> Claire Tomalin’s *Jane Austen: A Life* (1997) provides the most balanced account of Austen’s life, while Fiona Stafford’s *Brief Lives: Jane Austen* (2008) is an excellent short introduction, combining accurate biographical information with elegant literary analysis. Paula Byrne’s *The Real Jane Austen: A Life in Small Things* (2013) promises more than it delivers, but does take an interesting approach to Austen’s life, and breaks away from the usual chronological structure. The most recent biography, Lucy Worsley’s *Jane Austen at Home* (2017) adds nothing to works by earlier scholars. Because of the paucity of facts available to the biographer, all biographies of Jane Austen tend toward the speculative, and biographers generally extrapolate facts about her life from the fictional events of the novels. Le Faye and Stafford alone resist this temptation.

### **Critical Reception**

David Gilson’s *Bibliography* lists almost all contemporary reviews of Austen’s novels, and most of these are reprinted in truncated form in B.C. Southam’s *Critical Heritage* volumes. Reviews unknown to Gilson and Southam do, however, exist, although those reprinted in Southam provide a representative view. Early contemporary reviews tended to comment on Austen’s knowledge of character, and the good sense of the writer, while commenting that her works were superior to other novels, largely because of their eschewal of the melodramatic and sentimental. Austen’s novels were praised because of their domestic realism, and their pure morality. When Walter Scott reviewed *Emma* for the *Quarterly Review* of March 1816, for example, he described Austen’s style of novel as ‘presenting to the reader, instead of the splendid scenes of an imaginary world, a correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place around him’,<sup>45</sup> while Richard Whately termed her ‘evidently a Christian writer’ in his anonymous review of the posthumous *Northanger Abbey and Persuasion* of 1821.<sup>46</sup> Over the course of the nineteenth century, as evidenced by the comment by Cassandra Austen, Austen’s reputation rose steadily, though slowly. Major milestones included her inclusion in Richard Bentley’s *Standard Novels* series in 1833 and the publication of her nephew’s *Memoir* in 1870, which refocused attention on his aunt, and provided the opportunity for a number of lengthy retrospective reviews of her novels. Important, too, were the canon-forming efforts of two women writers of the nineteenth century, Julia Kavanagh and Margaret Oliphant, whose works also made Austen known, though sometimes at the expense of other Romantic women writers (the three volumes of Oliphant’s *Literary History of England, 1790-1825* (1882) have only one chapter dedicated to female writers, and this chapter is shared by Maria Edgeworth, Austen and Susan Ferrier, for example). By the 1870s, Austen’s reputation was assured. She is designated ‘a great name in literature’ in Richard Simpson’s influential review of James Edward Austen-Leigh’s *Memoir*, in the *North British Review* of 1870.<sup>47</sup> Her ‘marvellous literary skill’ was so well-established by 1876 that it could explicitly be taken for granted by Leslie Stephen in his essay on ‘Humour’ for the *Cornhill Magazine*.<sup>48</sup> In 1885, Mary Augusta Ward called Austen a ‘classic’ in her review of Lord Brabourne’s edition of the letters,<sup>49</sup> and in the same year, Henry James described her as a ‘genius’,<sup>50</sup> although by 1905, James had become disgusted by the commercialisation of Austen’s name and reputation, attributing her popularity – indeed ubiquity – to ‘the stiff breeze of the commercial, [...] the

body of publishers, editors, illustrators, producers of the pleasant twaddle of magazines; who have found their ‘dear,’ our dear, everybody’s dear, Jane so infinitely to their material purpose, so amenable to pretty reproduction in every variety of what is called tasteful, and in what seemingly proves to be salable, form.<sup>51</sup>

### ***Critical Currents***

The story of Austen’s rise to popularity, from relative obscurity in her own time, through modest success in the Victorian period and elite popularity among ‘Janeites’ in the Edwardian period, and canonisation in F.R. Leavis’s *The Great Tradition* of 1948, to the ‘Austen mania’ of the 1990s and early 2000s, is now a fairly well-known story, although, as Devoney Looser has recently pointed out, it is also a partial and prejudiced one.<sup>52</sup> It is documented until 1940 in Brian Southam’s excellent *Critical Heritage* volumes (1979 and 1987), and beyond the 1940s in a number of different works, including Deidre Lynch’s *Janeites: Austen’s Disciples and Devotees* (2000), Annika Bautz’s comparative study of *The Reception of Jane Austen and Walter Scott* (2007), Claire Harman’s *Jane’s Fame: How Jane Austen Conquered the World* (2009), Juliette Wells’ *Everybody’s Jane: Austen in the Popular Imagination* (2011), Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson’s *Uses of Austen: Jane’s Afterlives* (2012), and Claudia Johnson’s *Jane Austen’s Cults and Cultures* (2012). Katie Halsey’s *Jane Austen and her Readers, 1786 – 1945* (2012) proposes a series of models for reading Jane Austen at different historical times, while Brian Southam and Anthony Mandal’s *The Reception of Jane Austen in Europe* (2007), Valérie Cossy’s *Jane Austen in Switzerland: A Study of the Early French Translations* (2006), *Global Jane Austen: Pleasure, Passion and Possessiveness in the Jane Austen Community*, edited by Laurence Raw and Robert G. Dryden (2013), *The Postcolonial Jane Austen*, edited by You-Me Park and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan (2000), and Marie Nedregotten Sørboe’s, *Jane Austen Speaks Norwegian: The Challenges of Literary Translation* (2018) all discuss Austen’s reception outside Britain. Those interested in Austen’s global reception should consult these five studies as well as the special issue of *Persuasions On-Line* entitled ‘Global Jane Austen’, edited by Susan Allen Ford and Inger Sigrun Brodey (28:2 (Spring 2008)). Several works, including Linda Troost and Sayre Greenfield’s *Jane Austen in Hollywood* (1998), John Wiltshire’s excellent *Recreating Jane Austen* (2001), Sue Parrill’s *Jane Austen on Film and Television: A Critical Study of the Adaptations* (2002), and Gina Macdonald and Andrew F. Macdonald’s *Jane Austen on Screen* (2003) focus on her transformations in filmic adaptations and television series, and the newest works, such as Kylie Mirmohamadi’s *The Digital Afterlives of Jane Austen: Janeites at the Keyboard* (2014) on the phenomenon of Austen fan fiction.

This focus on Austen’s reception history and Austen’s popular readerships and fans comes about at least partly because Austen is very unusual among writers – and particularly, of course, among Romantic women writers – in continuing to claim both a critical and a popular readership. Where her more successful contemporaries and predecessors (such as Maria Edgeworth, Frances Burney, Ann Radcliffe, Felicia Hemans and Letitia Elizabeth Landon) have needed the recuperative efforts of feminist scholarship, and are still largely unfairly relegated to the margins of critical discourse and entirely ignored by the majority of the reading public, Austen has somehow escaped the obscurity of her peers. Critics therefore seek to explain, or at least explore, the reasons for her very broad, and enduring, appeal. Every generation, of both critics and common readers, reinvents Jane Austen for itself, it seems, and Austen criticism thus reflects both the critical and popular movements of the day.

The majority of the most recent Austen criticism therefore attempts to take account of this uncommon positioning, focusing on Austen in the contemporary world, although an

alternative (and very influential) strand of criticism aims to place Austen within her historical context as a Romantic woman writer. This critical endeavour really began with Marilyn Butler's *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (1975). Austen studies is, though, a wide and increasingly various field, which participates in the patterns and trends in wider literary criticism, such as the turn to New Historicism in the 1970s and 1980s and the movement towards feminist literary history at the same time, and more recently towards the more quantitative methods of book history. However, it also has its own particular thematic concerns and questions within these broader movements. These include the following questions: What makes Austen's style distinctive? Which writers influenced her? Is Austen fundamentally a comical or a didactic writer? Does she support or resist bourgeois ideologies? Was she feminist or antifeminist? How embedded is she in the politics and ideas of her period? What are her politics? Was she a traditionalist or a radical, conservative or subversive? Is she to be considered as an eighteenth-century or a Romantic-period writer? Was she a serious professional writer or did she write, as her brother claimed, for 'fun'? To what extent has her family's construction of her biography influenced our perceptions of Jane Austen? How typical or atypical was Austen's experience of writing and publication? And, because of some continuing uncertainty over the chronology of composition of her novels, and the lack of manuscript material for the large part of her *oeuvre*, the question of her artistic development remains a live one. It is difficult to differentiate among these various areas of study because of natural overlap, but the subjects and works outlined here give some sense of the major areas of debate within Austen studies.

Style and content are, of course, impossible to separate, and there are few, if any, studies of Jane Austen that do not deal to some extent with her style. Critics have long attempted to identify the elusive quality of her style, regularly disagreeing on precisely what defines it, but most agree that Austen's style is characterized by an innovative, indeed revolutionary, use of free indirect discourse, a precise attention to linguistic register and the connotations of words, habitual irony, flexible syntax, an extensive but elliptical allusiveness, and verbal economy. Early reviews considered Austen's style as particularly appropriate for a female writer because of its elegance, refinement and self-control. In Richard Whately's (anonymous) 1821 review of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* for the *Quarterly Review*, he first analyzed her style in detail, noting its economy, precision, and delicacy, and suggesting that it was the careful attention to language that gave her work its particular distinction. Whately also initiated a tradition of criticism that sees Austen as a serious moral writer, but one whose values were presented not didactically but, rather, implicitly. Mary Lascelles wrote the first full-length study of Austen's style, *Jane Austen and her Art*, in 1939, a work that, although dated in some respects, remains one of the best discussions of the subject. Lascelles argues that the success of Austen's style lies in the narrator's ability to create a bond with the reader. In Lascelles' argument, Austen's writing is 'as elliptical and indirect as talk among friends, where intuitive understanding can be counted on', and readers hence find delight in her novels through feeling this 'intuitive understanding'.<sup>53</sup> *Jane Austen's Geographies*, edited by Robert Clark (2018), focuses on a key element of style in Austen's work: the importance of geographical precision, pointing out how strikingly innovative it is. Other works that deal explicitly and directly with Austen's style are Tara Ghoshal Wallace's *Jane Austen and Narrative Authority* (1995), Massimiliano Morini's *Jane Austen's Narrative Techniques* (2009), and most recently, Joe Bray's *The Language of Jane Austen* (2018). Kathryn Sutherland's *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: from Aeschylus to Bollywood* (2007) made the controversial claim that much of what we think of as characteristically Austenian style was in fact the result of stylistic choices made in the workshops where her books were printed. Two further twenty-first-century works of criticism are also worth considering in relation to

debates about style: D.A. Miller's provocative deconstructionist *Jane Austen, or The Secret of Style* (2003) considers style in relation to gender norms, arguing that Austen's style attempts to position itself outside gender, while Bharat Tandon's *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation* (2003) returns to a much older tradition of criticism in elucidating the relationship between Austen's style and morality, arguing that Austen's novels embody an attempt to describe and set out a form of conversational morality. Tandon also refocuses the critical debate on Austen's humour, arguing lucidly for the importance of taking Austen's jokes seriously.

In 1940, D.W. Harding altered the course of twentieth-century Austen scholarship. Although Harding in fact had a series of precursors, including Reginald Farrer, Alice Meynell, Julia Kavanagh, Mrs Humphry Ward, Richard Simpson, and Q.D. Leavis, his remains the article thought to inaugurate the 'subversive Austen' critical tradition. Arguing against prevailing critical notions, which, according to Harding, presented Austen as a 'sensitive person of culture' who could 'still feel she had a place in society and could address the reading public as sympathetic equals,'<sup>54</sup> Harding suggested that the distinctive qualities of Austen's work derived from her isolation and alienation from society. Unlike Lascelles but like Margaret Oliphant (in whose 1870 article for *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Austen was described as 'remorseless', 'cynical', 'jeering' and suffering from 'a certain soft despair'),<sup>55</sup> Harding argued that Austen's novels were primarily bleak and painful satire, rather than gentle comedy, and claimed that they mocked the very people who most enjoyed her works: 'her books are, as she meant them to be, read and enjoyed by precisely the sort of people whom she disliked'.<sup>56</sup>

The sense of Austen as a subversive writer, inaugurated by Oliphant (though largely ignored until Harding revivified the theory) has many manifestations, and resulted in a number of revisionist works of criticism and biography in the twentieth century. The essays collected together in the special issue of *Textus: English Studies in Italy* 30:3 (2017) with the title 'Subversive Austen: From the Critic to the Reader' nicely epitomise the many ways in which critics have conceived of Austen as a subversive writer. In *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (1952), Marvin Mudrick followed Harding in focusing on the relationship between style and alienation in Austen's novels, while Mary Poovey combined this argument with a feminist theoretical approach, and politicized the question of style, arguing in *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen* (1984), that Austen's economical and elliptical style is the result of her negotiations with an ideology that devalued professional endeavour and demanded 'ladylike' codes of behaviour from professional women writers and a 'ladylike' style in their writing.<sup>57</sup> In 1972, in *The Language of Jane Austen*, Norman Page concentrated on Austen's syntactical and lexical choices, arguing that Austen's distinctions between seemingly synonymous terms reflect her views on a number of her period's most contentious social and political issues. Jill Heyd-Stevenson refocused attention on Austen's dissident comedy and eroticism in *Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions: Subversive Laughter, Embodied History* (2005).

The key stylistic feature of Austen's allusiveness naturally leads critics to consider literary influence and context. Kenneth Moler's *Jane Austen's Art of Allusion* (1968), written in the subversive Austen mode, was the first full-length study of allusion within the field of Austen studies. As noted earlier, critics divide over the question of whether Austen's most important topics and themes were those of eighteenth-century or Romantic writers, and this debate is often focussed through a discussion of literary influences, particularly in the wake of Harold

Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* (1973). Austen's brother Henry originally associated Austen with the writers of the Augustan age and the moralists and novelists of the previous century, such as Samuel Richardson and Samuel Johnson, in the 'Biographical Notice of the Author' attached to the first edition of *Persuasion*. Many critics do locate Austen as an eighteenth-century writer, beginning with A.C. Bradley in 1911, in the work usually considered as the start of modern Austen criticism, 'Jane Austen: A Lecture', in which Bradley identified the two main strains in Austen's work as humour and morality, and explored the influence of Ben Jonson, William Cowper and stage comedy on Austen's writing. Jocelyn Harris's *Jane Austen's Art of Memory* (1989) also considers the major influences on Austen's writing to be her eighteenth-century predecessors (and Shakespeare). Isobel Grundy similarly takes this line in her chapter on 'Jane Austen and Literary Traditions' in the *Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* (1997), while Peter Knox-Shaw discusses Austen's relationship to Enlightenment philosophers in *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment* (2004). In the twenty-first century, the treatment of Austen's allusions has broadened out, and two excellent books, Janine Barchas's *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen: History, Location and Celebrity* (2012) and Jocelyn Harris's *Satire, Celebrity and Politics in Jane Austen* (2018) demonstrate the extent to which Austen's works allude to the popular culture of her own period.

Henry Austen also wrote of his sister's affection for the contemporary poets George Crabbe and Cowper, and internal evidence in the novels (in particular *Persuasion*) suggests that she knew the Romantic poets – Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron and Scott, among others – and novelists well. Austen also directly mentions her Romantic contemporaries in a number of letters. Although Clara Tuite's argument in *Romantic Austen* (2002) is primarily a political one, she also suggests that Austen's major preoccupations were those of her Romantic contemporaries, and hence positions her as a Romantic writer. Janet Todd takes a similar position in *The Cambridge Introduction to Jane Austen* (2006). Mary Waldron's *Jane Austen and the Fiction of her Time* (1997) shifts the grounds of this debate to suggest that Austen's relationship with both her literary predecessors and her contemporaries was a consciously oppositional one, arguing that Austen's novels are 'about fiction itself, its parameters and possibilities,'<sup>58</sup> and that Austen wrote in order to criticize and perfect the form of the novel. Hence the question of whether Austen was more influenced by eighteenth-century or Romantic-period writers becomes, to an extent, moot; the key point is that Austen's practices as a reader and writer were characteristically resistant and oppositional. Olivia Murphy's *Jane Austen the Reader: The Artist as Critic* (2013) builds on these insights, as does Katie Halsey's *Jane Austen and her Readers* (2012). A feminist tradition of scholarship on literary influence (in which both Murphy's and Halsey's work belongs) locates Austen among her female predecessors and contemporaries, such as Maria Edgeworth, Frances Burney, Mary Brunton and Ann Radcliffe, while new scholarship in the fields of book history and the history of reading situates Austen within a broader context still. Anthony Mandal's *Jane Austen and the Popular Novel: The Determined Author* (2007), for example, discusses the contemporary publishing market in which Austen published her works, reminding us that this was a world in which a wide variety of printed matter – chapbooks, almanacs, conduct books, and other ephemera – played a part in forming Austen's reading world. Within this wider literary context, it is also important to mention the scholarship on Austen and the theatre, notably the two books published in 2002 both entitled *Jane Austen and the Theatre*, by Paula Byrne and Penny Gay, which reassess the evidence to overturn the long-held view of Austen as an opponent of the theatre and thus take their places within the tradition of scholarship that sees Austen as subversive rather than reactionary.

In the 1960s and 1970s, in Austen scholarship as in literary scholarship more broadly, Marxist and feminist critical modes were dominant. Marilyn Butler inaugurated an important critical debate about Austen's politics in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* in 1975. This work, and Alistair Duckworth's *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels* (1971), foregrounded the question of Austen's engagement with the political and social issues of her time. In Duckworth's reading, Austen's novels emerged as Austen's interventions in the social and moral controversies of her time, while Butler argued for a reassessment of Austen's political stance. Before Butler and Duckworth, the prevailing critical consensus was that Austen was uninterested in the world of politics, and thus that her novels did not engage with the great philosophical and social questions of the French Revolutionary era. Butler described Austen as a conservative anti-Jacobin writer, who reacted against the literature and events of the French Revolution, and as one who was profoundly concerned with political and philosophical issues. Butler's reactionary Austen opposed social change of all kinds, including increased freedom for women. While many critics have disagreed with Butler's reading of Austen as a conservative, seeing her instead as liberal, progressive, and subversive, few would now disagree that Austen's engagement with the wider world is a vital aspect of her novels, and almost all subsequent work engages either explicitly or implicitly with this idea. Claudia Johnson's *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel* (1988) refutes Butler's argument for Austen's conservatism, presenting her instead as a mild progressive, whose irony serves the purpose of parodying conservative morality. Tuite's *Romantic Austen* goes further, arguing for the profoundly subversive nature of Austen's work, and, most recently, Helena Kelly's *Jane Austen, The Secret Radical* (2016) takes this argument to its limits. In the wake of Butler's work, Austen's novels now tend to be read as the products of a particular time and place, resulting in the renewed feminist and historicist interest in Austen's place among her literary contemporaries discussed above.

Austen's proto-feminism, or otherwise, remains a matter of critical debate. Nineteenth-century criticism, with the exception of Oliphant's article of 1870, tended to see her as a model of contented feminine domesticity. The tradition of scholarship that began with Oliphant, which considered Jane Austen to be a serious, and profoundly disaffected writer, rather than the kindly and affectionate authoress of earlier criticism, would not take a distinctively feminist turn until the 1970s (although, as discussed earlier, the tradition that emphasized Austen's subversive qualities began in 1940 with D.W. Harding's article 'Regulated Hatred'). Even Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), the founding text of feminist literary history, saw Austen as (miraculously) unharmed by her situation as a woman in a patriarchal world: 'That, perhaps, was the chief miracle about it. Here was a woman about the year 1800 writing without hate, without bitterness, without fear, without protest, without preaching'.<sup>59</sup> The recuperative feminist literary history of the early 1970s provided a new context within which to consider Austen. Many of the books that established feminism as a paradigm for literary criticism included chapters or sections on Austen, including Patricia Meyer Spacks's *The Female Imagination* (1975), Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of their Own* (1977), and Nina Auerbach's *Communities of Women* (1978). Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's influential *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) contained an extended discussion of Jane Austen, which found in her a gendered 'anxiety of authorship', (as opposed to a Bloomian 'anxiety of influence') and suggested that she, like all women writers of her period, was stifled and victimized by the structures of patriarchy.<sup>60</sup> Margaret Kirkham's *Jane Austen, Feminism and Fiction* (1983), the first full-length analysis of Jane Austen as a feminist writer, compared Austen to the proto-feminist writers of the late eighteenth century. LeRoy Smith's *Jane Austen and the Drama of Woman* (1983), Mary Evans's *Jane Austen and the State* (1987), Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fiction*:

*A Political History of the Novel* (1987) and Devoney Loos's *Jane Austen and the Discourses of Feminism* (1995) all offer politicized feminist readings of the novels, as do Claudia Johnson (1988), and Mary Poovey (1984), who are discussed earlier. Many of the works already mentioned, such as Tuite's *Romantic Austen* also discuss the question of Austen's feminism.

One of the most important proto-feminist questions of Austen's own time was how women should be educated. And Austen herself was profoundly interested in the question of education, in particular women's education. This is a pervasive theme running through all the novels to some extent, although strongest in *Mansfield Park* and *Northanger Abbey*. A number of studies, largely written since the 1970s, focus on Austen's interest in education and didacticism; Barbara Horwitz specifically discusses women's education in *Jane Austen and the Question of Women's Education* (1991), and Laura Mooneyham White considers the relationships between the conventions of romance, Austen's use of language, and her views on education in her 1988 work *Romance, Language and Education in Jane Austen's Novels*. Like her contemporary, Hannah More, Jane Austen believed fundamentally that education should be moral or religious, rather than simply intellectual or indeed ornamental. Though it is currently not a fashionable topic in Austen studies, Austen's early critics and readers often commented on the religious dimension to Austen's novels. Such comments were both approving (as in Whately's praise of her unobtrusively Christian spirit), and disapproving (such as Cardinal Newman and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's remarks that her novels lacked spirituality). Modern critical appraisals of the role of religion in Austen's work are rare, but Gary Kelly's chapter on religion and politics in *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen* (1997) and Michael Wheeler's chapter on religion in *Jane Austen in Context* (edited by Janet Todd; 2005) do foreground this important aspect of her works. The three full-length studies of the topic are Michael Giffin's *Jane Austen and Religion: Salvation and Society in Georgian England* (2002), Gene Koppel's *The Religious Dimension of Jane Austen's Novels* (1988) and Irene Collins' *Jane Austen and the Clergy* (1994). Collins's biography of Jane Austen, *Jane Austen, the Parson's Daughter* (1998) also makes a strong argument for the importance of religion in Austen's life and writing.

Many studies do not fit into any of the categories but are still important contributions which have shaped the field of Austen Studies. For example, Lionel Trilling's *The Opposing Self: Nine Essays in Criticism* (1955) is still frequently cited by scholars of the twenty-first century, though the author's mode of criticism is sometimes considered unfashionable. Kathryn Sutherland's *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood* (2005) refocused the attention of Austen scholars on textual transmission and editing. John Wiltshire's *Jane Austen and the Body* (1992) was influential in arguing for more careful attention to the physical body in Austen's novels, while his most work, *The Hidden Jane Austen* (2014) turns attention back to Austen's prose techniques and argues for her interest in psychology. The turn to postcolonial theory in the 1980s had little impact on Austen studies until the publication of Edward Said's influential *Culture and Imperialism* in 1993. The long section on *Mansfield Park* in this book laid out the groundwork for subsequent postcolonial readings of Austen's texts. Such readings have become less popular in the second decade of the twenty-first century, but nonetheless influenced a number of readings, not least Patricia Rozema's controversial film adaptation of *Mansfield Park* (1999).

## Primary Sources

## ***Novels***

The best scholarly edition of Jane Austen's works is the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen, produced under the general editorship of Janet Todd between 2005 and 2008. The edition comprises the following:

*Emma*, ed. Richard Cronin and Dorothy McMillan (2005)  
*Northanger Abbey*, ed. Barbara M. Benedict and Deirdre Le Faye (2005)  
*Mansfield Park*, ed. John Wiltshire (2005)  
*Juvenilia*, ed. Peter Sabor (2006)  
*Persuasion*, ed. Janet Todd and Antje Blank (2006)  
*Sense and Sensibility*, ed. Edward Copeland (2006)  
*Pride and Prejudice*, ed. Pat Rogers (2006)  
*Later Manuscripts*, ed. Janet Todd and Linda Bree (2008)

The Norton Critical Editions of the six novels are also particularly useful for teaching purposes (they are also affordable), and the Broadview Press edition of *Jane Austen's Manuscripts*, ed. Linda Bree, Peter Sabor and Janet Todd is an excellent and affordable teaching edition.

## ***Letters***

Many – David Nokes suggests most – of Austen's letters were redacted or destroyed by her sister Cassandra after her death. Her collected letters were first published in an (unreliable) nineteenth-century edition by her great-nephew Lord Brabourne in 1884. The first scholarly edition of Jane Austen's letters was R.W. Chapman's *Jane Austen's Letters*, published in 1932. This was revised and updated by Deirdre Le Faye in 1995, and again in 2011. Now in its fourth edition, this is the standard scholarly edition of the letters, containing all known extant letters and their variants.

## ***Manuscripts***

Very few of Austen's manuscripts are extant. The three manuscript notebooks of her juvenilia are in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Vol 1; MS. Don. e. 7) and the British Library, London (Vols 2 and 3; Add. MS. 59874 and Add. MS. 65381). The untitled manuscript known as *Lady Susan* is in the Morgan Library and Museum, New York (MS. MA 1226). The Morgan Library also holds the title page of the novel that would later become *Northanger Abbey*, then entitled 'Susan' (MS. MA 1958 (1)), the satirical 'Plan of a Novel' (MS. MA 1034.1), the note entitled 'Profits of my Novels' (MS. MA 1034.5) and the first part of her unfinished work *The Watsons* (MS. MA 1034). The second part of this work is at the Bodleian (MS. Eng. e. 3764). Although the manuscript of Austen's novel *Persuasion* no longer exists, two cancelled chapters of this work remain, and are held in the British Library (MS. Egerton 3038) along with the 'Opinions' of *Mansfield Park* (Add. MSS. 41253A, f.5-f.8) and *Emma* (Add. MSS. 41253A, f.9-f.10) collected by the author. The manuscript of her unfinished fragment *Sanditon* is owned by King's College, Cambridge (no accession number). The manuscript of the *Sir Charles Grandison* playlet, which may be by Austen, is at Chawton House Library in Hampshire (no accession number).

All previously unpublished works (including some poems, prayers and doubtful attributions) have now been collected together in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen in the volumes entitled *Later Manuscripts* (edited by Janet Todd and Linda Bree) and *Juvenilia* (edited by Peter Sabor); see above. Many of them are also available on the *Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts* website (see below)

## Links to Digital Resources

The Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts Digital Edition: [www.janeausten.ac.uk](http://www.janeausten.ac.uk)

The Republic of Pemberley (community and resource site for Jane Austen fans):

<http://pemberley.com/>

Molland's (community and resource site for Jane Austen fans): <http://www.mollands.net/>

*Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal Online*: <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/>

'What Jane Saw' Online Exhibition: <http://whatjanesaw.org/>

*The British Library's History of England*: ['Introduction'](#): The Introduction to the Virtual Books edition.

*Jane Austen's History of England*: The 'Turning the Pages' virtual copy of the manuscript held at The British Library.

*Jane Austen's Manuscripts: The British Library*: A video on the material aspects of Austen's manuscripts held by the British Library.

Treasures of the Bodleian: [The Watsons](#) by Jane Austen: A video showcasing this manuscript.

## Further Reading

Austen-Leigh, James Edward, *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections*, ed. Kathryn Sutherland (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2002)

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Murphy, Olivia, *Jane Austen the Reader: The Artist as Critic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

Poovey, Mary, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984)

Southam, B.C., ed., *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1968 & 1987)

Sutherland, Kathryn, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)

Tandon, Bharat, *Jane Austen and the Morality of Conversation* (London: Anthem, 2003)

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Wiltshire, John, *Jane Austen and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Angus Vine for his suggestions during the writing of this article, to Peter Sabor for reminding me of the connections between Austen and Burney, to Maria Bajoli for productive conversations about Austenian adaptations, and to the anonymous reviewers of the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*, whose comments and suggestions were exceptionally helpful. An earlier version of one part of this article appeared in my Introduction to the Anthem Press Classics Series *Complete Works of Jane Austen* (2013). I am grateful to Anthem for permission to reproduce material first published there.

<sup>2</sup> Kylie Mirmohamadi, *The Digital Afterlives of Jane Austen: Janeites at the Keyboard* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 2.

<sup>3</sup> These include Myrmohadi's *Digital Afterlives*, Deidre Lynch's edited collection *Janeites: Austen's Disciples and Devotees* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), Gillian Dow and Clare Hanson's edited collection *Uses of Austen: Jane's Afterlives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), Gabrielle Malcolm's *Fan Phenomena: Jane Austen* (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2015), Claire Harman's *Jane's Fame: How Jane Austen Conquered the World* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2009), Rachel Brownstein's *Why Jane Austen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), Claudia Johnson's *Jane Austen's Cults and Cultures* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), Devoney Looser's *The Making of Jane Austen* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), Juliette Wells's *Everybody's Jane: Jane Austen in the Popular Imagination* (London: Continuum, 2011) and *Reading Austen in America* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), Emily Auerbach's *Searching for Jane Austen* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), and my own *Jane Austen and her Readers, 1786-1945* (London: Anthem, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, the essays collected in *Global Jane Austen: Pleasure, Passion and Possessiveness in the Jane Austen Community*, eds Laurence Raw and Robert G. Dryden (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), those in *The Postcolonial Jane Austen*, eds You-Me Park and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan (London: Routledge, 2000), those in *The Reception of Jane Austen in Europe*, eds Anthony Mandal and B.C. Southam (London: Continuum, 2007), and those in the special issue of *Persuasions Online* on *Global Jane Austen* (28: 2 Spring 2008). See also Gabrielle D. V. White, *Jane Austen in the Context of Abolition: 'a fling at the slave trade'* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) and Marie Nedregotten Sørbo, *Jane Austen Speaks Norwegian: The Challenges of Literary Translation* (The Hague: Brill, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Cassandra Austen to Anna Lefroy, 1 February 1844, quoted in David Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen*, rev. edn (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll, 1997), 483.

<sup>6</sup> Looser, 217.

<sup>7</sup> Tony Tanner, Original Penguin Classics Introduction to *Pride and Prejudice* (1972), in *Pride and Prejudice*, ed. Vivien Jones (Penguin, 2003), 368-9.

<sup>8</sup> *Jane Austen's Letters*, ed. Deirdre Le Faye, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (Oxford University Press, 1995), 312 & 306.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.* 275.

<sup>10</sup> See Janine Barchas, *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen: History, Location and Celebrity* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), *passim*, and Jocelyn Harris, *Satire, Celebrity and Politics in Jane Austen* (Bucknell: Bucknell University Press, 2017), *passim*.

<sup>11</sup> See Kathryn Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: from Aeschylus to Bollywood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 266-313.

<sup>12</sup> 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park*', in *Jane Austen: Later Manuscripts*, ed Janet Todd and Linda Bree (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 232.

<sup>13</sup> Raymond, Meredith B. and Mary Rose Sullivan, eds, *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to Mary Russell Mitford, 1836-1854*, 3 vols (Waco, TX: Armstrong Browning Library of Baylor University, The Browning Institute, Wedgestone Press and Wellesley College, 1983), II, 238 and Tennyson, Hallam, *Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir by his Son*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan and Co., 1897), II, 371.

<sup>14</sup> Frances Burney, *Cecilia*, ed. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody (Oxford World's Classics, 1999), 930.

<sup>15</sup> Henrietta, Countess of Bessborough to Lord Granville Leveson Gower, 24 November, 1811. Quoted in David Gilson, *A Bibliography of Jane Austen*, with introduction and corrections by the author (Winchester & New Castle, Delaware: St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1997), 9.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Gilson, *Bibliography*, 25.

<sup>17</sup> *Memoirs and Letters of Sara Coleridge*, ed. Edith Coleridge, 2 vols (King & Co., 1873), I, 75.

<sup>18</sup> Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, ed. Barbara M. Benedict and Deirdre Le Faye (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 30-1.

<sup>19</sup> 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park*', 234.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Gilson, *Bibliography*, 71.

<sup>21</sup> Gilson's *Bibliography* (section C) lists all known copies of nineteenth-century translations of Austen's novels (137-86).

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<sup>22</sup> Valérie Cossy and Diego Saglia, ‘Translations’, in *Jane Austen in Context*, ed. Janet Todd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 169–81 (169).

<sup>23</sup> Massimiliano Morini, ‘Jane Austen’s Irony: Lost in the Italian Versions of *Pride and Prejudice*’, *Textus: English Studies in Italy*, 30:3 (September–December), 189–207 (189).

<sup>24</sup> [Lewes, George Henry], ‘Recent Novels: French and English’, *Fraser’s Magazine*, 36 (1847), 687–95 and [Macaulay, Thomas Babington], ‘The Diary and Letters of Mme d’Arblay’, *Edinburgh Review*, 76 (1842–3), 523–70.

<sup>25</sup> Looser, 13–73.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in B.C. Southam, ed., *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage*, 2 vols (Routledge, 1968 & 1987), II, 232.

<sup>27</sup> See Looser, 198–215 & 75–97.

<sup>28</sup> A full list of twentieth-century translations can be found in David Gilson’s *Bibliography*, 186–207.

<sup>29</sup> See Lynch, 5, and Looser, *passim*.

<sup>30</sup> Arnold Bennett, ‘Books and Persons’ column, *Evening Standard*, 21 July 1927.

<sup>31</sup> Maria Clara Pivato Biajoli, ‘Pride and Prejudice and Zombies: Jane Austen Consumed by her Popularity’, *Espectro da Crítica*, 1.1 (2016), 35–48 (35).

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Southam, II, 301.

<sup>33</sup> G.H. Lewes, ‘The Novels of Jane Austen’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, 86 (July, 1859), 99–113 (102).

<sup>34</sup> *Jane Austen’s Letters*, 202.

<sup>35</sup> Katherine Mansfield, *Novels and Novelists* (London: Constable & Co, 1930), 304.

<sup>36</sup> See my discussion of Austen’s ‘games of ingenuity’ in chapter 3 of *Jane Austen and her Readers*.

<sup>37</sup> W.H. Auden, ‘Letter to Lord Byron’, in *Letters from Iceland* (London: Faber & Faber, 1937), 19.

<sup>38</sup> For a good discussion of the ways in which Austen’s minor characters direct our attention to the unpleasant economic realities of being a woman in Austen’s period, see Lynda A. Hall, *Women and ‘Value’ in Jane Austen’s Novels: Settling, Speculating and Superfluity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), *passim*.

<sup>39</sup> C.S. Lewis, ‘A Note on Jane Austen’, *Essays in Criticism*, IV:4 (October, 1954), 359–71 (363).

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, the special issue of *Textus: English Studies in Italy*, edited by Serena Baiesi, Carlotta Farese and Katie Halsey, entitled ‘Subversive Austen: From the Critic to the Reader’ (30:3 Winter 2017).

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Olivia Murphy, *Jane Austen the Reader: The Artist as Critic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), Juliet McMaster, *Jane Austen, Young Author* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), and Peter Sabor, ‘Introduction’ in *Jane Austen: Juvenilia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), xxiii–lxvii.

<sup>42</sup> A fuller discussion of the critical literature can be found in my article on Jane Austen in *Oxford Bibliographies Online* ([www.oxfordbibliographies.com](http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com)). I am grateful to Oxford University Press for permission to reproduce material here from Halsey, Katie, ‘Jane Austen’, *Oxford Bibliographies in British and Irish Literature*, ed. Andrew Hadfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> See Kathryn Sutherland, ed., *A Memoir of Jane Austen and Other Family Recollections* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>44</sup> David Nokes, *Jane Austen: A Life* (London: Fourth Estate, 1997), 7.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted in Southam, I, 63.

<sup>46</sup> Quoted in *ibid*, I, 95.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Simpson, ‘Review of James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen*’, *North British Review*, 52 (April 1870), 129–52 (129).

<sup>48</sup> [Leslie Stephen], ‘Humour’, *Cornhill Magazine*, 33 (1876), 324–5 (324).

<sup>49</sup> ‘M.A.W.’ [Mrs Humphry Ward], ‘Style and Miss Austen’, *Macmillan’s Magazine*, 51 (1885), 84–91 (91).

<sup>50</sup> *Henry James’ Letters 1875–83*, ed. Leon Edel (London: Macmillan, 1978), 422.

<sup>51</sup> Henry James, ‘The Lesson of Balzac’, in *The House of Fiction: Essays on the Novel*, ed. Leon Edel (London: Hart-Davis, 1957), 60–85 (62).

<sup>52</sup> Andrew Higson suggests that the term ‘Austenmania’ was coined in 1995–6 (Andrew Higson, *Film England: Culturally English Film making since the 1990s* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 125–6); Looser, *passim*.

<sup>53</sup> Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and her Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939; repr. 1974), 43.

<sup>54</sup> D.W. Harding, *Regulated Hatred and Other Essays on Jane Austen*, ed. Monica Lawlor (London: Athlone Press, 1998), 5–6.

<sup>55</sup> [Margaret Oliphant], ‘Miss Austen and Miss Mitford’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, 108 (1870), 290–313.

<sup>56</sup> Harding, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Work of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen* ((Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 47).

<sup>58</sup> Mary Waldron, *Jane Austen and the Fiction of her Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 14.

<sup>59</sup> Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own* (1929), ed. Michèle Barrett (London: Penguin, 1993), 61.

<sup>60</sup> Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), *passim*.